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UNCLAS BANGKOK 003592

SIPDIS

PM/DTTC FOR BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ETTC KOMC TH

SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN LEVEL 3: PRE-LICENSE END-USE CHECK ON APPLICATION 050127892

REF: STATE 118451

¶1. (U) According to the Thai Ministry of Commerce, Kangwan Firearms, Limited Partnership, was listed. The company was originally named Saha Phonchai Firearms Ltd., Part., and was renamed Kangwan on January 16, 1979.

Registration No. 0203515000052
Registered Date: January 21, 1972
Status: Limited Partnership
Capital Registration: 1,500,000 baht
Executives: Suni Pankaew with an investment of 500,000 baht, Benjamat Sitthiphongworakun with an investment of 500,000 baht, and Kritsani Sitthiphongworakun with an investment of 500,000 baht.
Managing-Partner: Suni Pankaew, without limitation of authority
Company Location: 449/18, Mu 12, Thep Prasit Rd., Tambon Nong Prue, Amphoe Bang Lamung, Chonburi.
The company has submitted annual financial reports for 1999-2007.
Purpose of Company: Retail sale of guns, ammunition, and other equipment.

¶2. (U) The company was not listed in the phone directory. The reftel phone number was a confidential number and the phone directory could not provide more information. POL FSN called the number and was transferred to a representative of Kangwan. The site visit revealed that the phone numbers for the office of the company in Chonburi Province were 038-300-938 and 081-209-1795. The phone directory confirmed that 038-300-938 was registered to Kangwan Firearms Ltd. Part.

¶3. (U) POL FSN visited the Kangwan facility November 18. The shop was located in Pattaya, Chonburi Province on the ground floor of a compound named Pattaya Housing Estate Project 2-3, which was a group of high-rise condominiums on a busy street of Pattaya. The reftel address was confirmed and the shop was open for business. POL FSN met Phansak Sakda, shop manager, as well as two of Kangwan's marketing and contracting personnel named Attar-Singh Ananthawan and his son, Arkhom. Phansak appeared to run the shop alone as no other staff were observed. Phansak said he has worked at this shop since it moved to the current location in 2000. The shop is a two-story concrete shop house with iron-barred windows and iron gates. It had a secured storage room, measuring approximately 1 meter by 2 meters by 1.20 meters, located under the stairway leading to the second floor of the shop. The walls and ceiling of the storage room were concrete. The room had an iron door secured by a conventional key lock. There was no sprinkler system, CCTV, or shop guard. Phansak said he lives on the second floor of the shop.

¶4. (U) There were no guns or ammunition for sale at the shop,

just gun accessories. Phansak said that a customer who wanted to purchase a gun would place an order at the shop in advance. The shop has a regular annual gun quota of fifty rifles and thirty pistols but they are mostly sold in Bangkok as the market was larger there. No customers entered the shop during the one hour meeting. Attar-Singh said the thirty-three pistols in reftel would be imported by Kangwan and sold to cadets of the police cadet academy in Nakhon Pathom Province. Each cadet was able to purchase a gun with their own money, and the gun would be used for police duties.

The gun would be personal property of the cadet. The reason for this program was that Royal Thai Police was unable to provide guns for all police personnel. The reftel guns would not be transported to the shop in Pattaya. Kangwan staff, shipping agents, and representatives of the police cadet academy would go to Suvarnabhumi Airport to take possession of the guns from customs officials after the guns arrived in Thailand. The guns would then be transported directly to the police cadet academy in Nakhon Pathom for registration and distribution.

¶ 15. (U) Phansak presented gun shop permit number 427/2551 and gun sale permit number 1/2551, both issued June 7, 2008, and to expire June 6, 2009, annually renewable, by Bang Lamung District Office, Chonburi. Attar-Singh presented the DSP-83 and a purchase order numbered 436/5 1, not 426/51 as stated reftel. All other details concurred with reftel. He also brought the original gun import certifications numbered 127/2551 - 155/2551, 168/2551, and 194/2551 - 196/2551 totaling thirty-three pieces. All details concurred with reftel other than reftel runs to only 195/2551. Attar-Singh stated that Kangwan had secured a contract to purchase seventy-six pistols for police cadets from the academy out of

a total of 201 cadets. Among the seventy-six orders, thirty-three had been ordered from RSR Group Inc., thirty-seven were ordered from Kimber, and six were ordered from STI.

¶ 16. (U) POL FSN November 18 met with the manager of the Pattaya Housing Estate Project 2-3. The manager said Kangwan had purchased the shop-house in October, 2001. Suni Pankaew had purchased the building. Kangwan paid utility expenses to the Project's office. Not irregularities were noted by the office. However, the shop was usually open only intermittently, but had been open quite often as of late.

¶ 17. (U) POL FSN November 18 met the Deputy District Chief of the Gun Section of Bang Lamung District Office, Chonburi Province. He confirmed the existence and registration of Kangwan and certified the gun shop permit and the gun sale permit. He explained that since demand for guns in Bangkok and southern Thailand was greater higher than in Pattaya, the shop rarely sells its full quota of guns to local customers. Therefore, it contracted with gun shops at locations in those areas to sell the remainder of its quota. The shop in Pattaya mostly sold gun accessories. The Gun Section did have any derogatory information on Kangwan.

¶ 18. (U) POL FSN November 28 met Pol. Lt. Col. Nathi Chaiyanuphong, Inspector of Sub-Division 1, Police Cadet Division at the police cadet academy in Nakhon Pathom Province. Nathi confirmed the intended purchase of guns as stated reftel and the names of the police cadets who had ordered the guns. Nathi also confirmed Kangwan's role in the purchase process.

¶ 19. (U) POL FSN November 28 met the Chief of the Gun Section at Sam Phran District Office in Nakhon Pathom Province. The Chief confirmed the gun purchase and related permits and Kangwan's status in the sale.

10. (U) POL FSN November 28 visited Kangwan's Bangkok office and met a member of the accounting staff. The staff confirmed that the Bangkok office provides administrative support to Kangwan's sales office in Pattaya. The staff said that there is also an office located in northern Bangkok that contacts and coordinates with Bangkok-based clients or

government offices.
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